

TOWN OF LANESBOROUGH SELECTMEN'S MEETING

Submitted by Diane Stevens, Town Secretary

April 25, 2016

Present: Mr. John Goerlach, Chair
Mr. Robert Ericson
Mr. Henry Sayers
Mr. Paul Sieloff, Town Manager

Warrants: Warrant Signed

The meeting was opened by John Goerlach at 6:00 p.m.

Public Comment

Robert Ericson congratulated residents Logan and David Wilson for completing the Boston Marathon in great time. Mr. Ericson also extended congratulations to all other competitors from Berkshire County. Dan McIntosh of 40 South Main Street came before the Board to inform them of water run-off from Route 7 on to his property due to the culvert being full of sand and salt. Mr. McIntosh stated that he had contacted MassDOT and was told that the Town is responsible for correcting the problem. Mr. Goerlach stated that he would speak with the DPW Director to add to his work schedule. Nicole Bercume, Attorney for Kara Zaks, came before the Board regarding the keeping of fowl. Attorney Bercume stated in her opinion that this matter is a zoning bylaw issue and should not be referred to the Board of Health to create a health regulation.

Permit(s) / Contract(s) / Use of Town Property or Notification to Town of Community Event / Appointment(s)

Annual Entertainment Licenses (weekday and Sunday – Arizona Pizza)

Jim Benson, Proprietor of Arizona Pizza, came before the Board with Weekly and Sunday Annual Entertainment Licenses for their review and approval. Mr. Sayers and Mr. Ericson asked if the patio would be exit only. Mr. Benson stated that it would be. Mr. Goerlach stated that he disagreed with this stipulation and believed patrons should be able to come and go and it not be exit only. Mr. Goerlach stated that this is not the case for all establishments. Mr. Ericson stated that he believed it is difficult to control the consumption of alcohol if patrons were able to access from the back of the building. Mr. Benson stated that it will not be an issue. Motion 16-053. Motion made by Robert Ericson to approve the Annual Weekly Entertainment License for Arizona Pizza, seconded by Henry Sayers. Motion carried 3-0. Motion 16-054. Motion made by Robert Ericson to approve the Annual Sunday Entertainment License for Arizona Pizza, seconded by Henry Sayers. Motion carried 3-0.[#1]

Memorial Day Parade – Sunday, May 29 at 2:00 p.m.

Mr. Goerlach announced that the Memorial Day Parade will be on Sunday, May 29, at 2:00 p.m.

Chapter 90 Proposed Roads – Stormview Road, Orebed Road, part of Sunrise Street, Prospect Street

Mr. Sieloff presented the Board with a Memorandum from DPW Director William Decelles relative to Chapter 90 projects at a cost of \$223,736.00. DPW Director Decelles' Memorandum depicted the roads to be repaired and the estimated cost to perform the work. Mr. Sieloff reviewed the list with the Board. Mr. Ericson asked about Prospect Street. Mr. Sieloff stated that he believed that Prospect could be placed first on the list next year. Mr. Sieloff supported the Memorandum from the DPW Director. Mr. Tinkham stated that this list does not support work on the southern portion of Sunrise Street and asked the Board to address this. Mr. Sayers asked why the DPW Director did not give an estimate to complete Sunrise Street. Mr. Goerlach stated that the Water Department is supposed to pay for half of the cost of Sunrise Street based on the agreement made with the Town. Mr. Sieloff stated that the Water Department had expended much of its money due to frozen lines two years ago and they are still recovering from that. Mr. Sayers would like further work to be performed on Sunrise Street. Mr. Sieloff stated that he would speak with the DPW Director. Mr. Goerlach asked the Board if they would like to continue the matter to the next meeting for further discussion. Mr. Sayers would like to hold the matter and get a price to complete all of Sunrise Street. [#2]

22 Narragansett Avenue Nuisance Complaint

Mr. Sieloff stated that this matter has been referred to the Board of Health.

Green Community Grant status report

Mr. Ericson presented the Board with a spreadsheet as to how money has been spent so far. Mr. Ericson stated that the Elementary School's usage of energy has been reduced with the changes made. Mr. Ericson stated that the bulk of the work performed has been at the Elementary School with some at the Police Station. Mr. Sieloff asked Mr. Ericson how the money is expended. Mr. Ericson said that a proposal is submitted for approval before work can commence. Mr. Ericson stated that if the Town shows a savings of 20% or more per the Green Community criteria that additional grants can be sought. [#3]

Proposed ICORI Policy and Lanesborough Elementary School Evacuation Policy

Mr. Sieloff presented the Board with a proposed Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) Policy and Lanesborough Elementary School Evacuation Policy for their review and approval. Mr. Sieloff stated that both policies have been vetted by the Police Department. Mr. Sayers asked what would be done if there were seniors in the building at the time of the evacuation. Mr. Sieloff stated that if it is planned drill it will be scheduled around the seniors. Fire Chief Charles Durfee stated that the van would be used to transport and the last drill went well. Motion 16-055. Motion made by Robert Ericson to approve the Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) Policy, seconded by Henry Sayers. Motion carried 3-0. Motion 16-056. Motion made by Robert Ericson to approve the Lanesborough Elementary School Evacuation Policy, seconded by Henry Sayers. Motion carried 3-0. [#4]

Budget Update & Proposed Schedule

Mr. Sieloff presented the Board with proposed modifications to the budget. Mr. Sieloff discussed the changes with the Board and asked if they had any questions. Mr. Ericson asked if this figure included the 2% raises for Town Hall employees. Mr. Sieloff stated that it did. Mr. Sieloff informed the Board that the cost of living went up 1.4%. Mr. Sieloff stated that the 2% increase is positive and reasonable to recognize these employees for their efforts. Mr. Ericson is concerned with where to go in the future. Mr. Sieloff stated that departmental budgets do not increase much every year. Mr. Goerlach asked Mr. Ericson how he could account for giving no raises for Town Hall employees and raises for contracted employees. Ron Tinkham stated it is a small portion of the budget. [#5]

Budget Discussion

Operating Budget

Mr. Sieloff stated that not many changes needed to be made from the preliminary budget. Mr. Sieloff stated that he has received feedback from the preliminary budget presented and this spreadsheet reflects those recommendations. The Board discussed the proposed modifications.

Ambulance Enterprise Budget

Mr. Sieloff stated that Ambulance budget is a concern and a meeting was held prior to the Selectmen's meeting to discuss solutions to generate additional revenue. Mr. Sieloff stated that he will discuss this with the Town Accountant. Mr. Sieloff informed the Board that he has spoken with representative from the State and there are no available resources for the Town. Mr. Sieloff stated that he will give the Board budgets in the next week or two. Mr. Goerlach asked about salaries. Mr. Sayers would like something done before July 1st. Mr. Sayers stated that EMT's are willing to volunteer to go on calls for free. Chief Charles Durfee spoke about regionalizing the Fire Department with Hancock and New Ashford. Mr. Goerlach asked Mr. Sieloff to send a letter to Hancock and New Ashford to see if this is a possibility. Mr. Sayers stated that it is difficult to count on city ambulances as they are more and more busy. Mr. Sieloff suggested hiring an employee who would work at either the Highway Department or Town Hall who is also an EMT. Mr. Goerlach stated that this person would have to be able to run equipment if hired at the Highway Department. Chief Durfee stated that the Board could talk to the Town Manager in Lenox who is looking into regionalizing to see if this would be effective. Mr. Sieloff stated that he will send the Board a budget for Sewer and Ambulance this week. Chief Durfee stated that the Town is under billing and should increase its fees. Mr. Sieloff asked Chief Durfee to come in on Wednesday to contact the Town Manager in Lenox to discuss other options.

Capital Budget

Mr. Sieloff informed the Board that he is still working on completing this budget.

Sewer Enterprise Budget

Mr. Sieloff stated that it is complete and it is almost identical to the last budget.

Discussion on property issues on roads off Narragansett Avenue

Mr. Sieloff stated that the Assistant Health Agent has been working on many properties which include 7 Ocean Street, 243 & 245 Narragansett Avenue have demolition permits and will be torn down, and 235 South Main Street is also ready for demolition. Assistant Health Agent Cal Jopru has been working with the Police Chief to locate these types of properties throughout the Town. Mr. Sayers stated that he would like to secure the building located at 235 South Main Street. Mr. Sieloff stated that he would look into this and placed the matter on an upcoming Agenda for follow up.

Town Hall Repairs

Mr. Sieloff asked the Board if they wanted to replace rugs in Town Hall. Mr. Ericson stated that the back side of building is cracking and requires repair. Mr. Goerlach asked for an estimate to replace rugs. Mr. Sieloff and the Board discussed the estimate to repair the front steps of Town Hall and the Board agreed that the stairs needed to be repaired. Mr. Sieloff stated that he would speak with the Building Inspector. The Board also agreed to replace the carpet. [#6]

Heavy Vehicle Use/Temporary Access Permit - \$10,000 Surety Bond requirement for contractors

The Board agreed to place this item on the next agenda. [#7]

Health Insurance costs

Kevin Dowling, a retired teacher from the Lanesborough Elementary School came before the Board and presented them with an email from Charles Oranellas who was the appointed PEC Retiree Representative. Mr. Dowling urged the Board not to change the percentage paid by retirees for health insurance premiums as it would be a hardship. Mr. Goerlach asked when school negotiations take place. Mr. Sieloff stated that he met with labor representatives for the Elementary School this morning. Mr. Goerlach asked if it would be possible to approach active employees to increase their rate to offset the cost to retirees. Mr. Sieloff stated that he would talk to Town Counsel. Mr. Sieloff discussed different options with the Board to reduce costs to the Town with health insurance premiums. Mr. Goerlach asked the Board if they would like to put a group together to discuss options in more detail. Mr. Tinkham stated the employee benefits are approximately 10% of the budget. Mr. Sieloff stated that it would be an approximate \$100,000-\$135,000 savings by increasing retirees' percentage rates to 50%. Mr. Sayers asked how this would affect the tax rate. Mr. Sieloff said it would be approximately 25 cents. Retired teacher Ken Mello, stated that this money would come from people on fixed incomes. Mr. Mello stated that the 90/10 split was given to teachers years ago in lieu of raises by Selectmen as a benefit and it should not be taken away. Retired Guidance Counselor Jane Shiyah agreed with Mr. Mello. Mr. Sieloff stated that he would talk to Town Counsel about negotiations. Mr. Sieloff stated that a vote should be made on Medex by the end of the fiscal year. Mr. Goerlach asked if the Board decides to change the split to 75/25 can it be changed again. Mr. Sieloff stated that it could. Retired Teacher Carol Morse stated that she cannot go on Medex and this will greatly affect her and she would like the Board to wait and get more information. Mr. Goerlach thanked the group for attending and stated that the Board would take the matter under advisement. [#8]

Summer Street Project discussion

Mr. Sieloff asked the Board how they wished to proceed with this project. Mr. Goerlach would like the Town to put out a design request. The Board discussed several different ways to proceed. Mr. Sieloff stated that there are also options from MASSDOT which he will review and get back to the Board.

Economic Development Committee Bylaws

Mr. Sieloff gave the Board proposed changes. Mr. Sieloff informed the Board that he had spoken with the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission and they do not offer this type of service. Mr. Goerlach stated that he has 4 people who are interested in forming a committee. Mr. Sieloff will make the changes and present a final draft for their view at the next meeting. [#9]

Other business which could not have been reasonably foreseen within 48 hours of the meeting.

None.

Selectmen's Items

Mr. Sayers stated that a resident had contacted him regarding horse droppings across their driveway. Mr. Sieloff stated that he would check into this. Mr. Sayers recommended adding the removal of horse droppings to the bylaws. Mr. Goerlach asked how the Police Chief is doing with his limited staff. Mr. Sieloff stated that the Chief is working a double shift today and employment ads have been placed for more part time officers. Mr. Sieloff stated that he would like the Board to reconsider the Chief's contract with all the hours he is working. Mr. Sieloff stated that the Chief presented him with a Memorandum asking to cash in some of his vacation time as he is unable to take it due to his limited staff. Mr. Goerlach stated that he would have no problem with the Chief cashing in his vacation time, if it is in his budget. Mr. Sieloff stated that he would place this item on the next Agenda for a follow up discussion and he will get a copy of the memorandum from the Chief to the Board. Mr. Goerlach asked if Berkshire Village needs money to get started with the water system installation. Mr. Sieloff will check with Town Counsel to see if this can be done outside of Town Meeting. Mr. Sayers stated that he believes it should be a loan from the Town. Mr. Sayers asked about mosquito spraying. Mr. Sieloff will invite an entity to come to the next meeting to discuss. Mr. Goerlach would like cost savings for retirees insurance at different percentages. Mr. Sieloff gave the Board the cost savings. Mr. Goerlach asked Mr. Sieloff if it is worth speaking with current employees to see if they would be willing to agree to a percentage rate change. Mr. Sieloff stated that he would contact Dupere law offices to see if this can be accomplished.

Town Manager Report

Mr. Sieloff spoke about the cancelled gas pipeline and stated that he will keep monitoring this project. Mr. Goerlach asked if money the Town gave to Berkshire Regional Planning will be returned. Mr. Sieloff stated that none of the money has been spent and he believed it would be returned but will have to wait until the project officially announces that it will not be moving forward.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn meeting made by Robert Ericson, seconded by Henry Sayers. Motion carried 3-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

Footnotes:

- [#1] Annual Sunday and Weekly Entertainment Licenses – Arizona Pizza
- [#2] DPW Director Decelles Memorandum – Proposed Chapter 90 Projects
- [#3] Green Community Spreadsheet
- [#4] Proposed ICORI Policy and Lanesborough Elementary School Evacuation Policy
- [#5] Proposed Budget Documentation
- [#6] Town Hall Stair Repair Estimate
- [#7] Heavy Vehicle Use/Temporary Access Permit - \$10,000 Surety Bond requirement for contractors
- [#8] Charles Oranellas Email (PEC Retiree Representative)
- [#9] Proposed Economic Development Committee Bylaws